

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

**Please amend the claims to read as follows:**

---

1. (Original) A system for allowing users to simultaneously contact multiple providers to secure an appointment on short notice, the system comprising:
- a facilitator that sets up, mediates, and monitors communications between the providers and the users and intervenes directly if needed;
  - a web application that includes a web site for facilitating interaction with the system;
  - a provider network for processing information provided by users of the system; and
  - a storage device for storing information processed by the system.
2. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein each provider is allowed to view and obtain requests for appointments from new users.
3. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein users are both members who have previously registered with the system and prospective members of the system.
4. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the web site includes a list of common medical terms, phrases and pharmaceuticals that are cross-referenced in multiple languages, thereby enabling communications between users and providers who speak different languages.
5. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the storage device includes a database for storing information and a data server for maintaining the database and information, which is necessary to run the system.
6. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the web application includes a web server for converting all hypertext based requests to native commands for processing by components of the storage device and for dynamically generating HTML pages in response to the requests.

7. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the system provides different types of access and privileges to different users based on at least one predetermined criterion.
8. (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein users may purchase access to the system through appropriate agents.
9. (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein users may purchase access to the system through the web site.
10. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein users may access the system through on-line means.
11. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein users may access the system through off-line means.
12. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein prior to using the system, providers must register a practice and the individual providers in the practice and the facilitator activates the registration after predefined contract agreements are ratified.
13. (Original) The system of claim 12, wherein providers may register practices for future partnerships.
14. (Currently Amended) A method for enabling a user to simultaneously contact ~~multiple a~~ multitude of providers to secure an appointment on short notice, the method comprising the steps of:
- entering, by the user, at least one ~~required-user defined~~ required-user defined criterion on a system web site;
  - determining, by the system, ~~each provider a~~ first plurality of providers within a specified area ~~that meets using the required-at least one~~ that meets using the required-at least one criterion ~~and identifying each provider's proximity,~~
  - the at least one criterion being common to the user's location-first plurality of providers;
  - providing, by the system, a list of the first plurality of providers to the user;

selecting, by the user, ~~multiple~~ a second plurality, of providers from the list of the first plurality of providers and submitting a list of the selected ~~multiple second plurality of providers~~ to the system;

~~notifying~~ generating a notification, by the system, to the selected ~~second plurality of providers;~~

~~responding~~ generating a response to the notification by each selected provider of the second plurality of providers to form a plurality of responses;

displaying to the user, by the system, the plurality of responses from each selected provider of the second plurality of providers;

confirming, by the user, one response with one selected provider; and

generating a confirmation to one of the plurality of responses to secure the appointment, by the user, and sending the confirmation to the provider associated with the one of the plurality of responses;

notifying, by the system, ~~those to a third plurality of providers whose responses were for~~ excluding the third plurality of providers from the appointment, the third plurality of providers being providers that did not accepted receive the confirmation by the user.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, further comprising the steps of:

entering, by the user, at least one user selected time criterion;

allowing providers with a provider having at least one available appointment times-time to specify ~~those times the~~ at least one available appointment time in the system; and

displaying ~~all the~~ at least one available appointment times-time to the user that ~~meet~~ meets the at least one require d-user selected time criterion when the user visits the web site.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the ~~step of user~~ has a location and the method further comprises determining-comprises for each of the first plurality of providers a proximity relative to the location of the user, wherein determining a proximity includes the step of using a geo-locator tool to determine a longitude and latitude of each provider that meets-of the required criterion-first plurality of providers.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of providing a list of the first plurality of providers comprises the step of providing biographical information for each ~~provider of the first plurality of providers~~.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of ~~notifying-generating a notification~~ comprises the step of using unique identifiers assigned to each of the ~~selected-second plurality of providers~~ to generate ~~a-the~~ notification for each of the ~~selected-second plurality of~~ providers.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of ~~notifying-generating a notification~~ comprises the step of sending an e-mail message to each of the ~~selected-multiple second plurality of providers~~.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of ~~notifying-generating a notification~~ comprises the step of sending a fax message to each of the ~~selected-multiple second plurality of providers~~.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of ~~responding~~ generating a response comprises the step of visiting the web site, entering an authentication code and responding to an appointment request by the user.

22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of displaying to the user comprises the steps of collating the plurality of responses by the system and forwarding the collated plurality of responses to the user.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of displaying to the user comprises the steps of collating the plurality of responses by the system and showing the collated plurality of responses to the user when the user logs in to the web site at a later time.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of displaying to the user comprises the step of forwarding e-mail messages with the plurality of responses to the user.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of ~~confirming~~ generating a confirmation comprises the step of confirming the one ~~response of the plurality of responses~~ directly with the ~~one selected provider associated with the one of the plurality of responses~~.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of ~~confirming~~ generating a confirmation comprises the step of clicking on a button, on the web site, that is associated with the one response.

27. (Currently Amended) A method for enabling a facilitator to mediate communication exchanges between users and providers of a system that allows the users to simultaneously contact multiple providers to secure an appointment on short notice, the method comprising the steps of:

allowing the facilitator to view exchanges and histories of exchanges between users and providers;

contacting the facilitator, by a user, to specify at least one ~~required~~ criterion for selecting a provider;

determining, by the facilitator, each provider within a specified area that meets the at least one ~~required~~ criterion, identifying each provider's proximity to the user's location and providing a list of providers to the user;

selecting, by the user, multiple providers from the list and submitting the selected multiple providers to the facilitator;

notifying, by the facilitator, the selected multiple providers;

responding, by the provider, to the notification;

communicating, by the facilitator, the responses to the user;

confirming, by the user, one response with one selected provider; and

notifying, by the facilitator, those providers whose responses were not accepted by the user.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the step of responding comprises the step of faxing a response to a facilitator.

29. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the step of allowing comprises the steps of checking, by the system, that each request has been processed within a predefined period of time and issuing a request to a monitoring group if the request has not been processed.

30. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the step of issuing comprises the step of intervening to set up the appointment, by the monitoring group, if a provider does not respond to a request from a user within a predefined time.

31. (New) The system of claim 27, wherein the determining, by the facilitator, each provider includes the criterion being user defined and common to each provider determined.

32. (New) The system of claim 1, wherein the facilitator intervenes directly by contacting at least one of the providers and users to secure the appointment.

---